

EARTH DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, in 2 days we will once again celebrate Earth Day, and this year's theme is a call to action on climate change.

Since the last Earth Day in 2006, a number of important events have taken place that have dramatically raised awareness on the important issue of climate change. Two groundbreaking reports left no doubt that human beings are responsible for global warming.

My home State of California passed landmark legislation to regulate greenhouse gas emissions. A group of major businesses and leading climate and environmental groups joined forces for the first time to launch the Climate Action Partnership and lobby for Federal regulations of greenhouse gases.

Al Gore won an Oscar for his powerful documentary on global warming, "An Inconvenient Truth."

The Department of the Interior proposed listing the polar bear as threatened under the Endangered Species Act due to disappearing sea ice.

The Supreme Court ruled in a landmark case that the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority to regulate carbon dioxide emissions as a pollutant under the Clean Air Act.

The United Nations Security Council had its first meeting on the issue of climate change as an urgent matter of international peace and security.

These events make the facts about climate change very clear. I am proud to say for the first time in a long time, this year's Earth Day finally holds the promise of real action on climate change, thanks to the election of a Democratic Congress last November.

Already, under the leadership of our Speaker, NANCY PELOSI, the House of Representatives has laid out a bold agenda to combat global warming and move America towards energy independence. For the first time, the House has created a Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming to help develop policy recommendations on this important issue.

As a part of our 100-hour agenda, the House also passed H.R. 6, the Clean Energy Act of 2007, repealing the \$14 billion in taxpayer subsidies to profit-soaked oil companies. Instead of forcing our constituents to pay oil companies twice, once at the pump and again with their taxes, we shifted these funds to support the development of clean alternative energy and improved energy efficiency.

We also passed a budget last month that makes substantial investments in research and development of new cutting-edge renewable energy technologies which will also fund the rapid deployment of these technologies.

Because we are also committed to leading by example, our leadership has called upon the chief administrative of-

ficer of this House to develop and implement a "Green the Capitol" initiative. This initiative will reduce our energy consumption and develop sustainable practices for the United States Capitol and congressional office buildings.

These initiatives are just the first step. Later this year, the House will also consider an innovation agenda that emphasizes the importance of developing alternative energy technologies and ensures that America continues to be a world leader in the green economy of the 21st century; also, a targeted energy package focusing on promoting energy alternatives and addressing global warming that will take another significant step forward in securing our energy independence; and a major farm bill that will promote American-made biofuels as well as other renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation programs.

We will also continue to develop legislation to regulate greenhouse gases and address some of the difficult challenges in stopping global climate change.

While the House moves forward with this agenda, we must also recognize that there is a substantial amount of activity that is already going on locally in our communities to combat climate change.

In many ways, in the Bay Area, in my district in California, we represent the hub of the environmental movement. Research is ongoing into alternative and renewable energy at the University of California, Berkeley, one of the premier public universities in our country. We hold the promise of a cleaner and brighter future for our children.

Bay Area businesses in my district have also taken the lead in greening their activities to reduce waste, improving energy efficiency, and save water, minimizing the impact on our environment.

Innovative programs funded in part through the city of Oakland are also training youth in my district about the importance of environmental stewardship and are providing them with new job opportunities and new career paths.

Community-based organizations in my district have also taken the lead in advocating for environmental justice and equity for all of our constituents. Together, our community is at the forefront of a robust environmental movement that is quite literally changing the world for the better.

On this Earth Day, let us celebrate all of this local ingenuity, as well as what we are doing in the House of Representatives from participating in local cleanups to just shopping at our local farmers' markets.

SAN JACINTO DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, growing up in Houston, Texas, I always liked April 21 because it was a school holiday. I believed there was no school on that day because it was my mother's birthday and she never really told me differently. I was proud to be the only kid that had a mom with a school holiday.

It was only later that I came to find out the holiday also represented the most important day and most important military victory in Texas history, one that is studied in military schools throughout the world. It occurred near what is now Houston, Texas. It was a unique holiday for southeast Texas called "San Jacinto Day."

After Santa Anna, the Dictator of Mexico, invaded Texas with his massive army, and then stormed over the Alamo walls, killing William Travis, Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, and the other Texas Volunteers on March 6, 1836, he went looking for the rest of the Texans that wanted independence from Mexico.

General Sam Houston had been building the Texas Army, and Santa Anna's three armies were giving chase. The Texas army and their families fled east in what historians call the "runaway scrape."

Finally, near the San Jacinto River and the Buffalo Bayou at Lynch's Ferry, Sam Houston stopped to fight. He and his army of 700 faced Santa Anna and his army of over 1,600 on the marshy plains of San Jacinto, Texas.

Scout Deaf Smith was ordered to burn the only escape bridge, thus trapping both armies between the river and the marshes.

It was April 21, 1836. General Sam wanted to charge into battle the next day at dawn, but decided not to wait any longer. So in the middle of the afternoon, General Sam and the Boys marched in single line in broad daylight with little cover towards the Mexican army.

The outnumbered Texans were an odd, terrifying-looking bunch. Without regular uniforms, they were dressed in buckskins, with pistols in their belts, bowie knives, long muskets, and tomahawks. They came from every State in the United States and from Mexico. The Tejanos, Mexicans loyal for Texas independence, were led by Captain Juan Sequin. So as not to confuse the Tejanos with Santa Anna's army, General Sam had Sequin put a playing card in the headband of each Tejano so they could be easily recognized.

This was General Houston's first Texas battle. Santa Anna's veteran army had yet to lose any battle. The Texans charged, yelling, "Remember the Alamo! Remember Goliad!" They carried a flag of a partially nude Miss Liberty, and the fife played a bawdy house song called "Come to the Bower."

Santa Anna army's, caught napping, was routed. Most of the enemy were killed or wounded. The rest were captured or disappeared. The victory was stunning. Only a dozen Texans were

killed. Santa Anna was captured, disguising himself in a private's uniform.

Texans wanted Santa Anna hung because of the Alamo and for murdering Colonel Fannin and his 300 volunteers at Goliad after they had surrendered to the Mexican army. Wise and politically astute General Sam Houston would have none of the lynching and spared Presidente Santa Anna for later bartering power.

Texas became a free and independent nation that day and claimed what is now Texas, and parts of New Mexico, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado and even Wyoming. It was one of the largest land transfers in world history as a result of just one battle. The latter land was sold to the United States to pay Texas' war debts. Texas was a republic for over 9 years, and then it was admitted to the Union in 1845 by 1-vote margin. Some now wish the vote had gone the other way.

In 1936, Texans built the San Jacinto Monument to honor the Texas War of Independence and General Sam's Victory. It looks exactly like the Washington Monument, but it has a star on top, and, of course, it is bigger.

Today, the bugles are silent and the battlefield is surrounded by petrochemical plants. Not much is said nowadays about Texas independence or San Jacinto Day. It is not even a school holiday anymore. But tomorrow, proud Texans will be at the San Jacinto Battleground to honor the few brave Texans and Tejanos that made Texas a new, free, independent nation.

We remember our past knowing we were a nation once, and sometimes we still act like an independent people and country. And the rest, they say, is Texas history.

I will fly the Lone Star flag proudly on San Jacinto Day, and I will take my mom a bunch of flowers, remembering that this glorious day was once a school holiday to celebrate my mother's birthday.

And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

SURGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, several months ago the administration announced the so-called "surge," or escalation of troops into Baghdad and the surrounding area. It was claimed by the administration that the escalation of over 2,800 more troops in Iraq was needed to get control of Baghdad and increase the security of the Iraqi people.

Just what has been the result of that claim? The exact opposite. Instead of control, we are seeing a surge in violence. We are seeing a surge in bombings and attacks. On one day alone, Wednesday of this past week, 171 Iraqis were killed in a wave of bombings. These were people going about their lives, going to the market, going to work, riding the bus; 171 people. They are not just a number, they are mothers, they are fathers, sisters, brothers, friends, neighbors and, yes, children.

The violence and brutality should not be ignored or swept under the rug or become just another statistic. These are people whose lives have been cut short.

□ 1300

You have to wonder if anyone in Iraq is safe anymore, especially when a bomber can enter the green zone and the parliament building to bomb the cafeteria. How can we expect Iraqi parents to send their children to school?

How could we imagine how much courage it takes just to go to the market around the corner from your home for food? Not to mention the bravery it must take to volunteer to serve as part of the Iraqi security force.

Our brave men and women in uniform are doing all they can do to provide security to the Iraqi people. It is not their fault that this security seems to be out of their reach. The fault lies entirely at the desk of one person, the Commander in Chief.

He is sending troops back for third and fourth tours of duty, and he has extended those tours by months. How many of those troops were provided sufficient training or body armor? How many are given access to mental health care? And once they make it home, how many were left in the squalor of Walter Reed hospital? This is unacceptable and against everything our country stands for.

Poll after poll has found that the Iraqis and the American public want an end to this occupation. Even this Congress has gone on record several times calling for an end to this occupation.

The administration seems to be the only one who wants to stay the course, but it is time to face the facts. The mission is not accomplished. We are not winning. More people are dying every single minute and every single hour and every single day we stay in Iraq.

I say enough is enough. Bring our troops home. I will not stop, I will not rest and I will not back down in my fight until every last soldier, Marine, airmen and sailor is home safe with his or her family.

WAR IS HELL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. McDERMOTT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I want to start off by commenting

on the lady's speech that was just made. I understand her position. War is hell. It is a horrible thing. We have been out to Bethesda and Walter Reed Hospital, and we have seen the damage that war has done to a lot of our young people.

It is a terrible thing. It was a terrible thing in all the other conflicts we have been involved in where people have been killed and maimed, World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the Revolutionary War, the Civil War. War is horrible. Nobody wants war. We all want our troops home as quickly as possible. There is no question about that. Where we differ is what this war is all about and what will happen if we do not do what is necessary.

Yesterday, a Sunni insurgent coalition in Iraq announced an Islamic cabinet, and they named an al Qaeda leader as their Minister of War. Throughout this whole debate over these years, the opponents on the other side have said al Qaeda was not involved in Iraq, that we did not have any reason to go in there. Al Qaeda was involved in Iraq. Osama bin Laden was involved in Iraq. The people that bombed the USS *Cole*, the World Trade Center, our embassies around the world were in Iraq, and now they have appointed a war minister over there who is the head of al Qaeda in Iraq today.

So there is a world war against terrorism. Al Qaeda is the main leader of that war against the United States and the rest of the world. It is a war that we cannot afford to lose. They are using children as bombs. They are taking carloads of dynamite and other explosives and are driving into crowded places to kill people.

We all know how horrible that is, and we also know how horrible it was when al Qaeda operatives flew into the World Trade Center and killed over 3,000 people, the worst tragedy in American history, and it was on our soil. So we are in a world war against radicals, al Qaeda, and we cannot back down.

If we back down in Iraq, as my colleagues on the other side want us to do, it is going to send a signal, already is sending a signal to them, the al Qaeda and the terrorists, that we will not persevere, that we will back down, and they will, as they said yesterday, create an Islamic State in Iraq. And if you create an Islamic State in Iraq and do away with the democracy that is there now, you are going to provide a breeding ground for more terrorism and more attacks on the West and Europe and the rest of the world.

This is a war that may go on for a while, but it is one we must not and cannot lose. My colleagues on the other side are well-intentioned, but the fact of the matter is they want to encourage and they are encouraging by their factions, our enemy, our mortal enemy, the terrorists and al Qaeda.

Now, yesterday, I was very distressed when the majority leader in the United States Senate said that we have lost the war. To say that when al Qaeda is appointing a war minister in Iraq is a